



Riots—1924.

Houston.

# MAINTAIN ON PETITION TO FREE MEN

Harassing incidents, one soldier was brutally beaten and a well beloved non-commissioned officer of the regiment also brutally beaten and fired upon because they remonstrated at the mistreatment of a Colored woman by local white policemen. The report spread among the regiment that their non-commissioned officer, Corporal Baltimore, had been killed. Whatever acts may have been committed by men of the regiment were not the result of any premeditated design. The men were graded to sudden and frenzied action. This is borne out by the long record for orderly and soldierly conduct on the part of this regiment throughout its whole history up to that time.

## Drastic Action

The punishment meted out to the members of this regiment was the most drastic and unusual in the history of the army. Nineteen of the men were hanged, the first 13 of them summarily and without right of appeal. This wholesale, unprecedented and almost clandestine execution shocked the entire country and appeared to the Colored people to savor of vengeance rather than justice. It bore the aspect of a visitation upon color rather than upon crime. This state of mind was intensified by the significant fact that although white persons were involved in the Houston affair and the regiment to which these Colored men belonged was officered entirely by white men, none but Colored men have ever been prosecuted or condemned. Fifty-four of the men are still in prison, serving life and long-term sentences.

It is not within the province of this delegation, nor is this the occasion, to argue these cases. But we wish to call your attention to the fact that the men were tried and convicted under a blanket indictment.

This petition of 120,000 names represents the earnest efforts through the past four months of every active element among the Colored people of the country.

We have the honor, Mr. President, respectfully to present this petition in the name of the signers and in the name of the Colored people throughout the United States whose attention will be focused upon the action it may please you to take. We present it in the name of the people whose hearts have long carried the harsh fate of these men as a heavy burden and with the feeling that whatever acts they may have committed, they have already been more than punished, and whose hope for their early pardon has been raised by your recent magnanimous action in the cases of wartime offenders.

3. The heavy punishment meted out to members of the 24th infantry, of whom 19 were hanged, 13 of them summarily and without right of appeal to the secretary of war or to the president, their commander-in-chief.

4. The exemplary conduct of the men as prisoners.

The record for bravery and loyalty of Colored soldiers in every crisis of the nation is too well known to be called to your attention here, and the long history of the 24th infantry is a part of that record. But we do wish to call to your attention the conditions which immediately preceded the riots of August, 1917, in Houston, Texas.

## Guards Disarmed

Contrary to all precedent, the provost guard of this Colored regiment had been disarmed in a state and in a city where insult was the daily experience of the Colored man wearing the uniform of the United States army. And what was the treatment accorded to men waking in Texas to be sent to France to fight and perhaps die for their country? Following a long series of humiliating and

**ARCHIBALD H. GRIMKE** of Washington, D. C., distinguished American, former United States minister to Santo Domingo and Spingarn Medallist.

**MRS. GABRIELLE PELHAM** of the National Race Congress.

**MRS. DAISY LAMPKIN** of the National Association of Colored Women.

**J. E. MITCHELL**, editor St. Louis Argus, representing National Negro Press association.

**ROBERT S. ABBOTT**, Editor Chicago Defender.

**BISHOP J. S. CALDWELL** of Philadelphia, representing the A. M. E. Zion church.

**CHANNING H. TOBIAS**, New York city, of the Y. M. C. A.

**ROBERT L. VANN**, editor Pittsburgh Courier.

**CARL MURPHY**, editor Baltimore Afro-American.

**CYRIL V. BRIGGS**, head of Crusader News Service, representing the African Blood brotherhood.

Bishop John Hurst of the A. M. E. church, who could not be in Washington, has authorized the use of his name and that of his church in connection with the delegation, as has B. J. Davis, editor of the Atlanta Independent, who represents the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows. Attached to the petition will be the names of a committee of fifty co-operating organizations and individuals.

The National Equal Rights League, William Monroe Trotter, secretary, will be represented by its own delegation of four.

began to believe their concerted objections had not been entirely ignored. From that day on the battle to gain these convicted men freedom has waged. Three have died behind the prison walls and one is now in an insane asylum. Five given 15 years have been paroled. A list of the prisoners follows:

Ernest E. Adams  
John Adams  
Wash Adams  
Reuben W. Baxter  
Douglas T. Bolden  
Fred Brown  
Richard Brown  
Robert Brownfield  
Walter Burkett  
Harrison Capers  
Ben Cecil  
James Coker  
Abner Davis  
Gerald Dixon  
William Frazier  
Callie Glenn  
James R. Hawkins  
George Hobbs  
Norman B. Howland  
William J. Hough  
†John H. Hudson, Jr.  
Nathan Humphries, Jr.  
Thomas Jackson  
\*James R. Johnson  
Walter T. Johnson  
Douglas Lumpkins  
Ben McDaniel  
Dean New  
George H. Parham  
Stewart W. Philips  
Leroy Pinkett  
Harry Richardson  
Luther Rucker

\* Dead.  
† Insane.  
‡ Paroled

a small one by the White House, was headed by James Weldon Johnson, its spokesman, Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which engineered the campaign for this monster petition. The other members of the delegation to the White House are:

## 14 in Delegation

**S. S. BOOKER**, of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, representing 3,000 college graduates.

**Rev. L. K. Williams**, of the National Baptist Convention, representing 2,938,579 Baptists.

**Nahum D. Brasher**, of the Associated Negro Press.

**A. Philip Randolph**, Editor of The Messenger and representing The Friends of Negro Freedom.

**Archibald H. Grimke**, of Washington, D. C., distinguished American, former U. S. Minister to Santo Domingo and Spingarn Medallist.

**Mrs. Gabrielle Pelham**, of the National Race Congress.

**Mrs. Daisy Lampkin**, of the National Association of Colored Women.

**J. E. Mitchell**, Editor St. Louis Argus, representing National Negro Press Association.

**Robert S. Abbott**, Editor Chicago Defender.

**Bishop J. S. Caldwell**, of Philadelphia, representing The A. M. E. Zion Church.

**Channing H. Tobias**, New York City, of the Y. M. C. A.

**Robert L. Vann**, Editor Pittsburgh Courier.

**Carl Murphy**, Editor Baltimore Afro-American.

**Cyril V. Briggs**, Head of Crusader News Service, representing African Blood Brotherhood.

## Bishop Hurst Not There

Bishop John Hurst, of the A. M. E. Church, with 548,355 members, who could not be in Washington to attend the ceremony, has authorized the use of his name and that of his church in connection with the delegation.

Attached to the petition were the names of a committee of 50 co-operating organizations and individuals.

The National Equal Rights League, William Monroe Trotter, Secretary, was represented by its own delegation of four.

## Four Reasons Given

Mr. Johnson said in part:  
Mr. President:

We come as a delegation representing the 120,000 signers of a petition asking you to exercise the power of executive clemency and pardon the former members of the United States Twenty-fourth Infantry now confined in Leavenworth Prison convicted on charges of rioting at Houston, Texas, in August, 1917. We come as the representatives not only of those who sign this petition, but we are the spokesmen of the sentiments, the hopes, the sorrows, too, of the more than ten million colored citizens of the United States.

The petition asks for the pardon of these men on four grounds:

1. The excellent previous record for discipline, service and soldierly conduct of the Twenty-fourth Infantry.

# FIFTY-FOUR AWAIT WORD BEHIND BARS COOLIDGE SEES DELEGATION AT WHITE HOUSE

James Johnson and Committee of 15 Urge Parliament for Twenty-fourth Infantrymen

## 120,000 SIGN PETITION

Washington, Feb. 7.—President Coolidge at noon today, at the White House, received a delegation of representative colored citizens of the United States, who presented to him a petition signed by 120,000 names of both white and colored people, asking for pardon for the 54 men of the 24th Infantry still imprisoned in Leavenworth Penitentiary, having been convicted on charges of rioting at Houston in 1917. The delegation, which was made

## Delegates Who Will Plead for 24th

The delegation to see President Coolidge in behalf of the members of the 24th Infantry now in Leavenworth penitentiary is as follows:

**S. S. BOOKER** of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, representing 3,000 college graduates.

**Rev. L. K. WILLIAMS** of the National Baptist Convention, representing 2,838,579 Baptists.

**NAHUM D. RASCHER** of the Associated Negro Press.

**A. PHILIP RANDOLPH**, editor of The Messenger and representing the Friends of Negro Freedom.

2. The provocation of local animosity against these men because of their race and color, which was manifested in insults, threats and acts of violence against these colored soldiers wearing the uniform of the United States Army and waiting to be sent to France to fight.

3. The heavy punishment meted out to members of the Twenty-fourth Infantry, of whom nineteen were hanged, thirteen of them summarily and without right of appeal to the Secretary of War or to the President, their Commander-in-Chief.

4. The exemplary conduct of the men as prisoners.

## TWO PRISONERS ON PAROLE TELL OF TEXAS RIOT

### Review Riot Which Resulted In 13 Army Executions and Wholesale Imprisonment

An echo of the past, a reminder of the Houston tragedy of 1917 and of the crowning disgrace of the American government presented itself recently when two veterans from the 24th United States regiment of infantry came into the office of the World's Greatest Weekly to pay their respects to the agency that has so consistently fought to help them in their time of need. The men, Samuel O. Riddle, 51 East 44th St., and Doyle Lindsay, 4114 St. Lawrence Ave., were both sentenced to Leavenworth prison for 15 years for alleged participation in the Houston demonstration. They began their sentences early in 1918 and were paroled in March of last year. Every month these men, volunteers in the U. S. army, must report to F. Emory Lyons, to whom they were paroled, who in turn must report to government officials.

#### Review Houston Riot

As these men talked one could see again the great injustice carried out; one was able again to see the horrible nightmare of Houston. It was easy also to see the cause underlying the situation. Houston, Tex., a Southern city, dominated by the doctrine of one of America's most infamous chief justices, that "a Negro has no rights a white man is bound to respect," and carrying out this policy by murdering, torturing and beating with official sanction all who did not happen to have a pigmentless skin.

It was not hard to see the white policemen beating a woman, nor was it hard to visualize, as these men talked, a sergeant of the 24th in-

fantry remonstrating with this arm of the law. The policeman next shows his love, respect and patriotism for his country by assaulting its uniform. The man, Sergeant Baltimore, is beaten unmercifully and then thrown into jail. Word is flashed to the camp that a comrade has been killed and the last thin shred of pent-up emotions is broken. Some one in camp fires a pistol and trained soldiers have reverted to what trained white soldiers, white civilians and white officials have reverted to under similar circumstances; they became a mob.

#### Citizens Petition Release

After the smoke had cleared away there arose a wild clamor for vengeance on the part of white people, and the government, run for, with and by white people, disgraced itself by heeding this demand. Thirteen soldiers were legally lynched in San Antonio to appease the wolf, and 67 others were sent to Leavenworth prison with sentences ranging from life down to 15 years.

Every year since the war presidents have commuted sentences and war offenders have been released. At the Christmas time just passed President Coolidge issued a statement releasing all men convicted of war-time conspiracies and crimes except those soldiers who, although anxious to fight for their country, found it necessary first to fight for themselves. Concerning them there is a dead silence in official ranks in spite of the fact that more than 100,000 citizens have voiced their desire through petition that these men be given their freedom—that the country may to a slight degree, absolve itself from its self-inflicted stigma.

According to Riddle and Lindsay the men are not badly treated in Leavenworth, but the very fact that they are being unjustly held serves as fuel to the conflagration that is serving to make enemies of those who would be their country's friends.



Riots-1924.

# PLEADERS FOR SOLDIER CONVICTS SERVING TERMS IN LEAVENWORTH RECEIVE PROMISE FROM COOLIDGE

(Special Correspondence)

WASHINGTON, Feb. 12.—Investigation by the war department of the cases of fifty-four members of the Twenty-fourth infantry (Negro), imprisoned in Leavenworth penitentiary for participating in the Houston (Tex.) riots of 1917, was promised by President Coolidge today to a delegation of Negroes who asked clemency for the imprisoned men.

The delegation, headed by James Weldon Johnson, secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, presented a petition signed by more than 120,000, they said, asking for executive clemency.

At the war department it was learned that a strong disposition existed in favor of granting a considerable degree of clemency in the cases of the former members of the Twenty-fourth infantry, all of whom, with one exception, were said to have been made prisoners throughout the portions of their terms already served. Sentences for several already have been reduced on various occasions because of unusually good conduct in the prison.

Some time ago the Negro prisoners intervened in a messroom riot at the prison when the life of the superintendent was threatened by an outbreak among the other prisoners. The prison officer was knocked down and about to be trampled and seriously injured, if not killed, when the Negro prisoners, a number of them former noncommissioned officers with long records of faithful service in the army, prior to the rioting in Houston, charged to his rescue and beat off the attack of their fellow prisoners. The outbreak, it was said at the war department, was due to the activities of I. W. W. men confined in the prison.

The prison commandant and war department officials have both felt that the Negro prisoners, some of whom are serving life sentences, were led astray in the events at Houston, and that in some cases it at least there was little to indicate that they were of a vicious temperament. It was made plain, however, that Secretary Weeks would make a complete examination and obtain the views of all interested army officials before recommending any course of action to President Coolidge.

## Army vs. Prison View.

In army records they are mutineers and murderers. In prison records they are the best behaved and most docile of the convicts. In at least some civilian quarters many of them

Houston.

are looked on as overentitled for themselves ready to back up the riot, into which at least some were thorities and that only two have unintentionally dragged.

Two days later another riot was started by the imprisoned I. W. W.'s, recommended, government officials say, that the life sentences be reduced to fifteen years and the fifteen year sentence. A guard was knocked down by others of them be dropped to five wobbly. Other wobblies started for years. No action has been taken.

## The Prisoner's Story.

are prostrate form, when several of the Negroes stepped in and saved the guard's life. Some weeks before they had fought bravely in putting out two prison fires.

The wobblies who rioted have long training was obvious. Since been released. The Houston rioters are still behind the bars, despite the visitor's recommendations from prison officials that their sentences be commuted.

Some of them are undeserving of clemency, but the majority have shown a desire to behave.

## Many Made Trusties.

Many have been made trusties and I personally know I suddenly heard have the confidence of their guards. A lot of shootin' and tryin' to get out went on that day. I was shown the warden's house by an extremely polite colored man. Another of the same hue cooked dinner, while a third served it.

"Three of the murderers and mutineers of Houston," smilingly explained the warden. "I'd trust those three anywhere."

The Houston riots formed one of the blots on America's period of war participation. Despite the pleas of men of knowledge, the war department sent colored troops into the south, where racial feeling was strongest.

At Camp Logan a white civilian policeman one afternoon arrested a colored woman loitering near the Negro encampment. Some objected to the roughness of the arrest. A fight started. Negroes rushed to aid of the color. Whites rushed to help the policeman. Some one shot. In a few minutes a race riot was in full progress.

## No Quarter Asked or Given.

All of the savage buried in the Negro flashed out and quarter was neither given nor asked. Scores who had no desire to fight automatically were dragged in, first in self-defense and then in offense. Civilian authorities wanted to prosecute the cases, but the army promised "complete justice and swift punishment"—and gave the latter.

A number of Negroes were executed. Few doubt that they deserved it. But in the desire to accentuate the first part of "complete justice" dozens of others were sentenced to the penitentiary. Some undoubtedly deserve it and deserve to stay there, but those who have investigated believe that many of the fifty-four now behind the bars do not deserve the long sentences received.

In the government records at Washington is a letter from W. I. Biddle, warden at Leavenworth, stating that these rioters have at all times shown

## JOINT RACE HEARING ON SOLDIER PARDONS

N.A.A.P. AND NATIONAL EQUAL RIGHTS LEAGUE EACH TO HAVE DELEGATIONS AT 10 TO PLEAD FOR SOLDIERS—N.A.A.C.P. TO PRESENT RESOLUTIONS OF RACE BODIES—F.E.F. 7 AT NOON RACE ASKED FOR SILENT PRAYERS AT THAT HOUR.

Secretary Trotter of the N. E. R. L., has received the following letter from the White House:

The White House, Washington, January 29, 1924.

My Dear Sir: Your letter of January twenty-five, asking for a hearing for representatives of the National Equal Rights League, has been received.

An appointment has been made for from the time they gimme here," he answered with a laugh, "but so far's 12.15 o'clock, February seventh. I have already arranged an appointment with these prisoners—part of the 176 serving for sentences imposed for wartime violations—is ready to recommend clemency for the majority, but thus far recommendations have been shown a desire to behave.

Every official who has come in close contact with these prisoners—part of the 176 serving for sentences imposed for wartime violations—is ready to recommend clemency for the majority, but thus far recommendations have been shown a desire to behave.

Sincerely yours,

C. B. SLEMP,

Secretary to the President.

Mr. William M. Trotter, Secretary,

National Equal Rights League, 103

Court Street, Boston, Mass.

## It Is Now Up to the President

THE cause of the imprisoned soldiers at Leavenworth is resting at the door-steps of President Coolidge. The petition, with over one hundred thousand signers, was left with the President last Thursday, February 7, 1924. It was a history-making event.

With the possible exception to Monroe Trotter's innate disposition to constitute the proverbial fly in the ointment, the presentation was illustrative of sane, intelligent and yet positive, action on the part of men and women who know how to make intelligent effort for a given purpose, without detracting from the cause.

President Coolidge was deeply interested and exhibited his interest. His response was highly respectful and clothed in language that could not be misinterpreted. If he can find it possible, under all the facts and circumstances surrounding the case, to exercise executive clemency, we are satisfied he will do it. It would be a source of regret to the President, if investigation discloses the impossibility of executive action. There was no effort made to conceal his real attitude. His manner and his words bespoke his conviction.

Now that the petition has been presented, and it suffered not the least in the hands of James Weldon Johnson, we must abide a suitable convenience for the President to give the matter the attention it deserves. It will require time to investigate the bulky record of the case. It will require time for the President to review whatever findings are placed before him. We have petitioned, and we must now await results.

The whole subject is now up to the President.

# DELEGATION THAT PUT 24TH INFANTRY CASE BEFORE PRESIDENT



This picture made on the White House lawn at Washington shows delegation of representative citizens who presented a petition to President Calvin Coolidge at noon, Feb 7, in behalf of the 54 men of the 24th infantry now serving sentences in Leavenworth penitentiary for alleged participation in the riot at Houston, Texas, in 1917. The plea urging freedom for the imprisoned soldiers contained 120,000 signatures gathered by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People through the aid of various newspapers. The spokesmen for the petitioners were James Weldon Johnson of New York City and William Monroe Trotter of the Equal Rights League of Boston, Mass. Reading from left to right: James R. Neill, William H. Fields, Robert S. Abbott, Rev. M. W. D. Norman, Maurice Spencer, Mrs. Gabrille Pelham, Channing H. Tobias, William Monroe Trotter, J. E. Mitchell, Shelby J. Davidson, Dr. Julia H. P. Coleman, Nahum D. Brascher, James Weldon Johnson, Robert L. Vann, Archibald H. Grimke, S. S. Booker, Cyril V. Briggs, A. Philip Randolph, M. O. Dumas, Melvin J. Chisum and Carl Murphy. The President cordially received the delegates and assured them of his interest in the soldiers' case.

*Chicago Defender*  
2/16/25

Riots - 1924.

Houston.

# WAR DEPT. COMMUTES THE SENTENCES OF SEVENTEEN HOUSTON RIOT MARTYRS

James Weldon Johnson Goes to Washington to See Secretary of War Weeks Concerning Other Cases.

Sentences of seventeen of the thirty-eight life-termers among the fifty-four former members of the Twenty-fourth Infantry, in whose behalf the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and other bodies recently presented a petition with 125,000 signatures to President Coolidge, have been commuted by the War Department, it was announced today. Press dispatches announce that "their sentences in most of the cases were cut to thirty years" from life imprisonment, making the men eligible for parole in from three to four years.

The national office of the N. A. A. C. P. immediately upon receipt of the news telegraphed both to Warden W. I. Biddle, of the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth and to the War Department in Washington, asking for detailed information covering the cases of all the men of the 24th Infantry whose cases had been reviewed by the Military Board and informing Secretary Weeks that the dispatch

from Leavenworth "indicates a result bitterly disappointing to colored people of the country."

James Weldon Johnson, N. A. A. C. P. secretary, is leaving for Washington to take up the matter directly with War Secretary Weeks. Before leaving New York, Mr. Johnson said the N. A. A. C. P. would continue this fight until all the men were released from prison or dead.

## War Dept. Informs N.A.A.C.P. of Coming Parole of Houston Mart

People, to Ben McDaniel, whose sentence has been commuted from life to 19 years and three months, and who will be eligible for parole in May of this year. This information is contained in a letter to the N. A. A. C. P. from Robert C. Davis, Adjutant General of the War Department.

Action on the case of McDaniel was hastened when the N. A. A. C. P. re-

ported to the War Department that McDaniel was suffering in health from his confinement in the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth. The report

is based on a physical examination of

McDaniel, in consequence of which the

doctors reported that he was "anemic and despondent and further confinement may develop a true psychosis."

Ben McDaniel, His Health Broken By Long Confinement, May Be Released in May.

The first of the Houston martyr cases to be acted upon by the War Department in response to the campaign of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People at Leavenworth. The N. A. A. C. P. letters brought about a physical examination of McDaniel, in consequence of which the doctors reported that he was "anemic and despondent and further confinement may develop a true psychosis."

P. letters brought about a physical examination of McDaniel, in consequence of which the doctors reported that he was "anemic and despondent and further confinement may develop a true psychosis."

On April 5, Secretary of War Weeks wrote to the N. A. A. C. P. as follows:

"With further reference to your letter of March 15, 1924, in behalf of General Prisoner Ben McDaniel, confined at the United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kan., I am pleased to inform you that, as the result of a very thorough investigation of this case by the

Board of Officers recently appointed to consider the cases of military prisoners in confinement, the sentence of confinement imposed by a general court-martial upon McDaniel has been reduced from life to nineteen years and three months."

As Federal prisoners are entitled to parole when they have served one-third their terms, this reduction of sentence makes McDaniel eligible for release in May. McDaniel has written the N. A. A. C. P. he is eligible for parole on May 9.

ONE HOUSTON SOLDIER WILL GET PAROLE

WASHINGTON, April 26.—The first of the Houston Martyr cases to be acted upon by the War Department, is Ben McDaniel, whose sentence has been commuted from life to 19 years and 3 months, and who will be eligible for parole in May of this year. This information is contained in a letter to the N. A. A. C. P. from Robert C. Davis, Adjutant General of the War Department.

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## Clemency for Negro Mutineers, at Last

In commuting the sentences of 17 negroes serving life terms for participation in the murders and mutiny in Houston in 1917, the specially appointed clemency board has made a very undiscriminating use of its power, to say the least.

The board, of course, was under the pressure of the sentiment that has grown up since the war for ameliorating the sentences of men convicted of war time offenses. No doubt, there are many prisoners in the federal prisons serving sentences much more severe than justice demands. During the excitement of the war penalties were sometimes so severe as to appear utterly unreasonable in a time of peace.

The cases of the negro mutineers at Houston do not come in that category, however. The time their offense was committed had no bearing upon the character of it, except possibly to make it the more heinous.

Filled up on rotten whisky, and urged on by a coterie of low characters among the negro race of the city, these negroes who have just been granted clemency broke camp, defied with arms their superior officers, and invaded the unsuspecting city of Houston, killing and maiming as ruthlessly as if they had been the German army itself out on a "frightfulness" expedition.

Army officers as well as civilians, whom they were here to protect, fared equally during the murderous march. The offense of the culprits was against both the United States army and against the people of Houston.

They were tried and convicted by a military court, uninfluenced by local sentiment, and the penalties were no more severe than would have been meted out by civil juries under the most orderly and least passionate conditions.

What justification there is for cutting the life terms of these unfaithful soldiers and murderers of innocent and unprotected white men, women and children, it is difficult for the people of this city and State, who are familiar with the facts, to find.

In their position that the negroes who perpetrated that horror on Houston be compelled to suffer the full penalty of the law, they have been sustained on more than one occasion by Secretary Weeks, a republican secretary of war, who agreed that there was no ground upon which to base an argument for clemency.

The prisoners are not to be released immediately, but they have been put in line for release on parole within a few years. The decision is a victory for the Northern agitators of the race question, who have ignored the facts in the case in their appeal for clemency and depended entirely upon appeal to racial prejudice, and is a perversion of justice disappointing to all who are opposed to nullifying the laws of the land against crimes of the first order.

## ~~Information~~ Freedom For Negro War Prisoners

On August 23, 1917, at Houston, Texas, there occurred a clash between Negro soldiers of the Twenty-fourth men and white citizens. This was the second campaign for their release. A petition was circulated through cooperation of churches, fraternities, Negro newspapers and other agencies and more than one hundred twenty thousand signatures were secured. Last February 7 a delegation of Negro citizens, representing about fifty cooperating organizations and outstanding individuals, presented a petition to President Coolidge asking for discharge from prison of these men, on the following grounds:

of the convention made a visit to these soldiers in Leavenworth prison. Warden Biddle of the Prison upon the occasion is reported to have praised these men and to have stated that they deserved release. Following that the National Association launched a circulated through cooperation of churches, fraternities, Negro newspapers and other agencies and more than one hundred twenty thousand signatures were secured. Last February 7 a delegation of Negro citizens, representing about fifty cooperating organizations and outstanding individuals, presented a petition to President Coolidge asking for discharge from prison of these men, on the following grounds:

"The excellent previous record for discipline, service and soldierly conduct of the Twenty-fourth Infantry.

"The provocation of local animosity against these men because of their race and color, which was manifested in insults, threats and acts of violence against these colored soldiers wearing the uniform of the United States Army and waiting to be sent to France to fight.

"The heavy punishment meted out to members of the Twenty-fourth Infantry. . . .

"The exemplary conduct of the men as prisoners." The petition further recited that: "following a long series of humiliating and harassing incidents, one soldier was brutally beaten and a well beloved non-commissioned officer of the regiment also brutally beaten and fired upon because they remonstrated at the mistreatment of a colored woman by local white policemen. . . . Whatever acts may have been committed by men of the regiment were not the result of any premeditated design."

The petition asked the President to exercise his executive clemency to pardon the men and restore them to citizenship. President Coolidge received the petition sympathetically, stated he would refer the matter to the War Department, and if he was empowered to act in behalf of the men would do so. The War Department a few days later announced that officials would begin at once inquiry into the cases of all soldiers in Federal prisons. In April came the announcement that one of the Negro soldiers would have his sentence commuted to nineteen years and three months and thus be eligible to parole this month. Newspaper reports recently stated that about twenty-five of these men would have their sentences commuted from life imprisonment to thirty years and thus would be eligible to parole in three or four years, but this has not been confirmed by the War Department. During the agitation for their release there have been reports of considerable opposition to it from white citizens, especially in or about Houston, Texas.

Following a bloody clash which ensued in which seventeen white people were reported killed and a number injured, one hundred seventeen members of the Infantry were tried by court-martial, of whom ninety-one were sentenced to periods of confinement. Thirteen were immediately sentenced to death and executed without appeal to the War Department or the President, either through their counsel or through official channels of the Army. When the execution of the thirteen men was made public the colored people of the United States and many white citizens were shocked and aroused. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People secured about twelve thousand signatures to a petition and presented it to President Wilson calling his attention to the executions, "punishment so drastic and so unusual," ran the petition, "in the history of the Nation that the execution of additional members of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry would to the colored people of the country savor of vengeance rather than justice."

Sixteen other men were under sentence of death at the time. After consideration, President Wilson affirmed death sentence upon six of them, who were later executed, and commuted the sentences of the other ten to life imprisonment. These with fifty-seven others, who were sentenced by court-martial, were lodged in the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. Among the total were thirty-eight life prisoners and fifteen serving terms of twenty years each. On February, 28, 1921 the National Association had a delegation of colored men and women present to President Harding a petition signed by fifty thousand, mainly colored citizens, asking that these men be released. As a result five were released. Eight have died in prison, one was sent to St. Elizabeth's Hospital for treatment, and one escaped. Fifteen of the ninety-one have been restored to duty and seven have been released by remission or expiration of sentences. There remain now fifty-four of these men in the prison after six years. One of the latter, McDaniel, has his case up before the Board of Parole with expectation of parole in May.

On September 1, 1923 the Association was having its annual convention at Kansas City and 558 delegates

*4-15-3-27*  
the cases of the former members of the 24th Infantry still imprisoned for their alleged share in the Houston riot, said:

"I have been authorized by the war department to state: 1. That the figures given by the newspapers of the number of life termers granted clemency are incorrect, and that the number is larger than was announced. 2. That the Houston riot cases have not been finished, and when they have been the war department will furnish a detailed statement to the N. A. A. C. P.

"I can say of the officers appointed to review the cases, Majors Ross and Stansfield, that they seemed well disposed and impressed me as being sympathetic and fair. While I was in Washington a special conference was called at which were present the assistant secretary of war, the judge advocate general and Majors Ross and Stansfield, and at my request the above statement was authorized.

"The visit of an N. A. A. C. P. representative to the war department has unquestionably exerted a favorable influence on the progress of the Houston riot cases."

## ~~Information~~ MORE HOUSTON MARTYRS TO RECEIVE CLEMENCY, BELIEF

New York, May 2.—Walter White, assistant secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, on returning from Washington, where he had interviews at the War Department with the officers appointed to examine into

*Chicago*

Riots—1924.

# Text of Johnson's Presentation Speech

In presenting the petition for the pardon of the Houston riot martyrs, James Weldon Johnson, secretary of the N. A. A. C. P., addressed President Coolidge as follows:

We come as a delegation representing the 120,000 signers of a petition asking you to exercise the power of executive clemency and pardon the former members of the United States Twenty-fourth Infantry now confined in Leavenworth Prison convicted on charges of rioting at Houston, Texas, in August, 1917. We come as the representatives not only of those who signed this petition, but we are the spokesmen of the sentiments, the hopes, the sorrows, too, of the more than 1,000,000 colored citizens of the United States.

The petition asks for the pardon of these on four grounds:

1. The excellent previous record for discipline, service and soldierly conduct of the Twenty-fourth Infantry.

2. The provocation of local animosity against these men because of their race and color, which was manifested in insults, threats and acts of violence against these colored soldiers wearing the uniform of the United States Army and waiting to be sent to France to fight.

3. The heavy punishment meted out to members of the Twenty-fourth Infantry, of whom 19 were hanged, 13 of them summarily and without right of appeal to the Secretary of War or to the President, their Commander-in-Chief.

4. The exemplary conduct of the men as prisoners.

The record for bravery and loyalty of colored soldiers in every crisis of the nation is too well known to be called to your attention here, and the long history of the Twenty-fourth Infantry is a part of that record. But we do wish to call to your attention the conditions which immediately preceded the riots of August, 1917, in Houston, Texas.

Contrary to all precedent, the provost guard of this colored regiment had been disarmed in a state and in a city where insult was the daily experience of the colored man wearing the uniform of the United States Army. And what was the treatment accorded to men waiting in Texas to be sent to France to fight, and perhaps die, for their country? Following a long series of humiliating and harassing incidents, one soldier was brutally beaten and a well beloved non-commissioned officer of the regiment also brutally beaten and fired upon because they remonstrated at the mistreatment of a colored woman by local white policemen. The report spread among the regiment that their non-commissioned officer, Corporal Baltimore, had been killed. Whatever acts may have been committed by men of the regiment were not the result of any premeditated design.

This petition of 120,000 names represents the earnest efforts through the past four months of every active element among the colored people of the country. It is the result of the united and consecrated work of civic, fraternal, educational and religious organizations, and of that comparatively new but mighty force, the colored press. All of those elements in the race are represented in this delegation.

We have the honor, Mr. President, respectfully to present this petition in the name of the signers and in the name of the colored people throughout the United States whose attention will be focused upon the action it may please you to take. We present it in the name of the people whose hearts have

## Houston.

long carried the harsh fate of these men as a heavy burden and with the feeling that, whatever acts they may have committed, they serving life sentences and 6 long terms, will be eligible for release have already been more than punished; and whose hope for their early pardon has been raised by your recent magnanimous action for release early in 1927; and the in the cases of war-time offenders.

## ALL 24TH INF. GET REDUCED SENTENCES

### War Department Acts In Case of Men Involved In the Houston Riot

### 18 RELEASED AT ONCE

### 10 Life Termers Have Year More to Serve; Others Out Within 4 Years

New York, May 20.—The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 69 Fifth Avenue, today made public a letter from John W. Weeks, U. S. Secretary of War, dated May 13th, reporting that the prison sentences of every former member of the 24th Infantry, still imprisoned for alleged participation in the Houston Riot of 1917, had been reduced.

According to the present revisions of sentence, every one of the men will be eligible for release, some immediately, some within a year, and all within the next four years.

Secretary Weeks stated that he considered the War Department "has been most liberal in its treatment of the prisoners," especially since 30 of the men had been sentenced for life.

#### Summary

To summarize the above letter the facts, in brief are: 18 of the

ter from the secretary of war to the N. A. A. C. P. is as follows:

WAR DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON

May 13, 1924.

AG 253,1 (5-12-24) Pris.

Mr. Walter White,  
Assistant Secretary, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,  
69 Fifth Avenue,  
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

In harmony with the understanding with you, I am furnishing you the following information relative to the so-called Houston rioters:

Of the fifty-four of these men who were in confinement in the penitentiary when the board of officers visited that institution, thirty were serving life sentences.

The N. A. A. C. P. and those agencies which worked so faithfully in this effort yet feel that full pardon which was asked for should have been granted these men. It is noted from Secretary Week's letter that: "Under a rule of the War Department governing the subject, the case of every military prisoner is considered for clemency at least once each year, and neither the recent investigation by the board of officers, nor any action taken upon its recommendation, will preclude the consideration annually of the case of each one of the prisoners involved."

The N. A. A. C. P. is gratified at the results secured. At the same time it will continue its efforts for year 1925; and the remaining twenty have received reductions

## War Departm't Reduces Houston Martyrs' Terms

### 18 LONG TERM MEN TO BE RELEASED AT ONCE—10 LIFE TERMERS ELIG- IBLE FOR RELEASE WITHIN A YEAR

From life to thirty years, which will make sixteen of them eligible for home parole in 1927, and four of them eligible for home parole in 1928.

In passing upon these cases great weight was laid upon the evidence presented at the trial and the conduct in confinement of the prisoners concerned; and the investigation showed that the men whose sentences were reduced to thirty years were the more deeply involved in the affair, and had the poorer records of conduct in confinement. Of the other twenty-four prisoners involved in the Houston riot, serving sentences of less than life at the time of the investigation of the board, eighteen are eligible for parole during the calendar year 1924, and six will be eligible for home parole in 1925,

New York, May 16.—The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 69 Fifth Avenue, today made public a letter from John W. Weeks, U. S. Secretary of War, reporting that the prison sentences of every former member of the 24th Infantry, still im-

prisoned for alleged participation in the Houston riot of 1917 had been reduced, and that, according to the present revisions of sentence, every one of the men will have been eligible for release over a period from now until 3 years and 7 months from now. The let-

As this recent investigation has resulted in reductions of sentences in every case of the so-called Houston rioters, with the exception of six who are eligible for parole not later than August, 1924, and as the latest date (under the modified sentences) on which any prisoner will become eligible for home parole is August, 1928, it is considered that the war department has been most liberal in its treatment of the prisoners.

Under a rule of the war department governing the subject, the case of every military prisoner is considered for clemency at least once each year; and neither the recent investigation by the board of officers, nor any action taken upon its recommendation, will preclude the consideration annually of the case of each one of the prisoners involved.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) John W. Weeks,  
Secretary of War.

In making public this report, the N. A. A. C. P. made the following statement:

"To summarize the above letter the facts, in brief, are: Eighteen of the Houston martyrs are eligible for immediate release; 16 of them—10 serving life sentences and 6 long terms—will be eligible for release within a year; 16 will be eligible for release early in 1927, and the remaining four early in 1928, or three years and seven months from now. The men were committed to Leavenworth prison in December, 1917, and have thus served six years and five months.

"While the results obtained thus far are not all for which the N. A. A. C. P. and cooperating agencies hoped and worked for, nevertheless there is cause for rejoicing in that those who have the longest sentences yet to serve have only three years and seven months.

"The N. A. A. C. P. and those agencies which worked so faithfully in this effort yet feel that full pardon which was asked for should have been granted these men. It will be noted from Secretary Weeks' letter that these cases are to be reviewed annually. The N. A. A. C. P. is gratified at the results secured. At the same time it will continue its efforts for further reductions of sentence."

# ALL HOUSTON RIOT PRISONERS ELIGIBLE FOR PARDON BY 1928

be mentioned that heretofore fifteen

After several years of fighting by various organizations and friends, a decided reduction has been made in the sentences of others. Ray of hope is now in sight for the ill-fated members of the 24th Infantry who are now confined in the penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, for alleged participation in the Houston, Texas riot, August 23, 1917.

Representative Daniel R. Anthony of Kansas, the most active member of Congress in these men's behalf, and exhaustive investigation, ten of makes public a letter this week from the thirty men under life sentences the War Department informing him that under the findings of the special Board of Officers which recently re-viewed every case separately, that every one of these soldiers are now serving life sentences that will make them eligible for release on home parole during the calendar year of 1925; and the subject to being pardoned between this summer and the summer of 1928, make sixteen of them eligible for depending on the length of time their home parole in 1927 and four of them sentences are for.

eligible for home parole in 1928.

The letter from the War Department to Representative Anthony is as follows:

War Department, Wash., D.C.  
Honorable Daniel R. Anthony,  
House of Representatives.

My dear Mr. Anthony

I have your letter of the 23rd ultimo, inclosing one addressed to you by Mr. W. I. Biddle, Warden of Leavenworth Penitentiary relative to the so-called Houston rioters. Mr. Biddle states the recommendations relative to clemency for those men made by the board of officers are very disappointing to the prisoners and to their friends.

The cases of the so-called rioters have been considered by the war department many times since their confinement in the penitentiary. While earnest efforts have been made on various occasions by the friends of these prisoners for clemency in their behalf, there has been and is now, strong opposition to such action from people who are familiar with the facts in connection with the trouble. As an indication of the fact that the War Department has endeavored to avoid injustice to the prisoners it may

of every military prisoner is considered for clemency at least once a year and neither the recent investigation by the board of officers, nor any action taken upon its recommendation will preclude the consideration annually of the case of each one of the prisoners involved.

Representative Anthony was largely instrumental in having the Board of Officers appointed to review these cases. He introduced House Resolution 226 on December 9, 1921 requesting the War Department to furnish certain information in reference to the sixty-two soldiers sent to the Leavenworth prison for alleged participation in the Houston, Texas riot. Practically all of the information serving life sentences. As the result was given in the recent report of the Board of Officers who investigated the matter for the War Department.

The sentences given these soldiers are without a parallel in the history of the American Army. A continuous fight for their release has been waged by every branch of Negro activities since 1918. Petition after petition has been presented to each President of the United States asking for executive clemency.

As this recent investigation has resulted in reduction in sentences in every case of the so-called Houston rioters with the exception of six who are eligible for parole not later than August, 1924, and as the latest date (under the modified sentences) on which any prisoner will become eligible for home parole in August 1928, it is considered that the War Department has been most liberal in its treatment of the prisoners.

Under the rule of the War Department governing the subject, the case

Riots-1924.

## FIVE HOUSTON RIOTERS ARE GIVEN FREEDOM

Thirteen of Their Fellows  
Were Hanged.

LEAVENWORTH, Kas., Sept. 17.—Five negroes, former members of the 24th Infantry, sentenced to life imprisonment in connection with the Houston riots, were released from the federal penitentiary here today on parole.

The paroles were recommended at a meeting of the federal parole board here last Monday and orders freeing the prisoners were received early today from the Department of Justice at Washington. *9-13-24*

The men released were Ruben Baxter, state of Washington; Douglas T. Bolden, Iowa; Gerald Dixon, Missouri; and Roy Tyler and Joseph Williams of Illinois.

They were convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment with 67 other negro soldiers of the 24th Infantry for disobedience in time of war and assault with intent to murder. Thirteen others were hanged.

## Five Twenty-Fourth Vets Freed From Leavenworth

(Continued from Page 1)

given an opportunity to work since they were paroled have proved that they are as good workers as they would have been fighters had they been given the chance. They are dependable and are now asking for a fighting chance to prove their worth to the community. Plans are being made to secure work for them to help them regain the positions in life that

they lost through no fault of their own.

Attorney Bell, who has practiced in this city for 32 years and who has devoted the greater part of the past seven years to the cause, has expressed himself as being gratified with results already obtained and declares that he will continue the fight in behalf of those remaining in prison.

Statistics on those imprisoned given in the accompanying table:

No.	Name	Exp. Date	Sentence	Commutated	Discharged
12241	Ernest H. Adams		Life	No	No
12242	John Adams		Life	No	No
12243	Wash Adams		Life	No	No
12244	Reuben W. Baxter	May 15, 1931	Life	To 20 yrs.	9-17-24
12245	Douglas T. Bolden	May 15, 1931	Life	To 20 yrs.	9-17-24
12246	Fred Brown		Life	No	No
12247	Richard Brown		Life	No	No
12248	Robert Brownfield		Life	No	No
12249	Walter Burkett		Life	No	No
12250	Allie C. Buttler		Life	No	No
12251	Harrison Capers		Life	No	Died
12252	Ben Cecil		Life	No	No
12253	James Coker		Life	No	No
12254	Abner Davis		Life	No	No
12255	Gerald Dixon	May 15, 1931	Life	To 20 yrs.	9-17-24
12256	William Frazier		Life	No	No
12257	Callie Glenn		Life	No	No
12258	James R. Hawkins		Life	No	No
12259	George Hobbs		Life	No	No
12260	Norman B. Howland		Life	No	No
12261	William J. Hough		Life	No	No
12262	*John H. Hudson, Jr.		Life	No	10-4-19
12263	Nath. Humphries, Jr.		Life	No	No
12264	Thomas Jackson		Life	No	7-13-20
12265	James R. Johnson		Life	No	Died
12266	Walter T. Johnson		Life	No	No
12267	Douglas Lumpkins		Life	No	No
12268	Ben McDaniel		Life	No	No
12269	Dean New		Life	No	No
12270	George H. Parham		Life	No	No
12271	Stewart W. Philips		Life	No	No
12272	Leroy Pinkett		Life	No	No
12273	Harry Richardson		Life	No	No
12274	Luther Rucker		Life	No	No

## Houston.

12275	Jessie Sullivan		Life	No	No
12276	Roy Tyler		Life	No	9-17-24
12277	Joseph Wardlow		Life	No	No
12278	Jos. Williams, Jr.	May 15, 1931	Life	To 20 yrs.	9-17-24
12279	Charlie Banks		Life	No	No
12280	Henry L. Chenault		Life	No	No
12281	John Geter	Feb. 3, 1932	Life	To 20 yrs.	No
12282	John M. Gould	Feb. 3, 1932	Life	To 20 yrs.	No
12283	Jas. H. Mitchell	Feb. 3, 1932	Life	To 20 yrs.	No
12284	Edward Porter, Jr.	Feb. 3, 1932	Life	To 20 yrs.	No
12285	Robert Smith		Life	No	No
12286	Robert Tillman	Feb. 3, 1932	Life	To 20 yrs.	No
12287	Mazekiah G. Turner	Feb. 3, 1932	Life	To 20 yrs.	No
12288	Quiller Walker		Life	No	Died
12289	Grant Anderson	Oct. 5, 1931	Life	To 20 yrs.	No
12290	Fred Avery		Life	No	No
12291	William Burnett	Oct. 5, 1931	Life	To 20 yrs.	No
12292	Isaac A. Beyo	June 2, 1930	Life	To 18 yrs.	No
12293	Wm. L. Dugen		Life	No	No
12294	James Gaffney		Life	No	No
12295	Charles J. Hatten		Life	No	No
12296	Albert T. Hunter	Oct. 5, 1931	Life	To 20 yrs.	No
12297	John Lanier	Oct. 5, 1931	Life	To 20 yrs.	No
12298	William Mance		Life	No	No
12299	Sherman V. Vetencer		Life	No	No
12300	Jas. E. Woodruff	Oct. 5, 1931	Life	To 20 yrs.	No
12301	Tom Bass		15 yrs.	To 11 yrs.	Parole
12302	Doyle Lindsay		15 yrs.	To 10 yrs.	Parole
12303	Warsaw Lindsay		15 yrs.	To 10 yrs.	Parole
12304	Eddie Maxwell		15 yrs.	To 12 yrs.	Parole
12305	Samuel O. Riddle		15 yrs.	To 10 yrs.	Parole

\*Sent to insane hospital Oct. 4, 1919.

## ARE FIRST OF LIFE TERMERS GIVEN LIBERTY

### Were Doing Time for Houston Fracas

Leavenworth, Kan., Sept. 26.—Efforts in behalf of the imprisoned members of the famous 24th U. S. court, hanged 13 of them and rushed infantry, who were thrown into Leavenworth bastille in the fall of 1917 for obeying a human impulse

and going to the rescue of a defenseless woman who was being abused by a policeman in Houston, began to bear the first fruits of success Wednesday when five of the men walked

out of the gates free. The five are: Roy Tyler, Douglas T. Bolden, Gerald Dixon, Joseph Williams, Jr., and Reuben W. Baxter. Tyler is a Chicago Negro, his mother, Mrs. Tyler, resides at 3200 Hodges Ave.

Among the many agencies and individuals that have worked so assiduously for the welfare of these imprisoned veterans, giving no quarter, they are giving no quarter, that they are at least accorded that measure of

fairness that a person who volunteers for service in the interest of this country merits, none deserves higher credit than the veteran attorney, T. W. Bell of this city, who has labored

tirelessly night and day, who was one of the first to visit the men in prison and start the ball rolling in their behalf.

The release of these five men brings the number of those still incarcerated

## More Houston Riot Martyrs Freed

### One Prisoner Says He Saw Carpenter Building His Scaffold in Texas.

LEAVENWORTH, Kans., Dec. 1.—Four former soldiers, convicted for participation in the Houston Tex. riot of 1917, were released from the Federal prison Wednesday night on parole. Their names were among nine for whom certificates of parole were received by Warden Biddle on the eve of Thanksgiving Day. *12-3-24*

Those freed were: John Geter, John H. Gould, Edward Porter and James Mitchell. Their sentences had been commuted to 20 years by a special War Department board which held hearings at the prison last spring.

It is said Mitchell, especially, had reasons to be thankful, he told Warden Biddle, when notified of the parole. Once he heard carpenters erecting the scaffold at Fort Sam Houston from which he was to be hanged. His sentence was commuted to life imprisonment by President Wilson. Mitchell has been leader of the prison orchestra.

The destinations of the men were kept secret when they left the prison. All have been provided with employment, it was stated by Warden Biddle. Only 31 of the 67 Houston rioters brought here remain in prison.

### 20 HOUSTON MARTYRS RELEASED THIS YEAR RESULT OF N. A. A. C. P. CAMPAIGN

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 69 Fifth Ave., New York City, today announced that four Houston Martyrs released on Sunday, December 14 made a total of 20 released from the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, during the year. These figures were corroborated by a telegram received from warden Biddle.

The N. A. A. C. P. in connection with the above news, made public a complete list of the men released since the presentation to President Coolidge in Washington last February of a petition signed by 125,000 names; the movement being a direct result of the N. A. A. C. P. pilgrimage to Leavenworth from Kansas City during the 14th annual conference of the Assoc-

iation in 1923. The list of men re-

leased together with the dates of parole, is as follows: Issac A. Deyo, to the scene as soon as news of the June 5; Ben McDaniel, Aug. 16; Rueben W. Baxter, Sept. 17; Douglas T. Bolden, Sept. 17; Gerald Dixon, Sept. 17; Roy Tyler, Sept. 17; Jos Williams 17; Jr., Sept. 17; Albert T. Hunter, Nov. 10; John Ranier, Nov. 10; Jas. Eney of La Porte, Texas, a son of the Woodruff, Nov. 10; J. H. Hudson, Jr., famous Col. Sam Houston, to act as Nov. 13; John Geter, Nov. 26; John H. Gould, Nov. 26; Jas. H. Mitchell, Nov. tried.

26; Edward Porter, Jr., Nov. 26; Grant Anderson, Dec. 3; William Burnett, Dec. 14; Chas. J. Hatton, Dec. 14; Robert Tillman, Dec. 14; son protesting against further executions after 13 men had been hanged Hezekiah J. Turner, Dec. 14.

At the time of the N. A. A. C. P. as a consequence of which ten death sentences were commuted. 3. The N. A. A. C. P. on February 19, 1918 presented a petition signed by 12,000 names to President Wilson, protesting against further executions after 13 men had been hanged

4. In 1919, in co-operation with Mr. Emmet J. Scott an effort was made to members of the 24th U. S. Infantry in Prison and one in the hospital who have the War department reconsidered the cases.

5. In 1921, the N. A. A. C. P. gathered 50,000 names to a petition which was presented to President Harding, asking pardon for the men.

6. In 1923, at the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the N. A. A. C. P. in Kansas City, a pilgrimage of more than 500 members and friends was made to Leavenworth Penitentiary and the men were assured that unremitting efforts would be continued for their liberation. In co-operation with churches, fraternal bodies, welfare organizations and the Negro press, the N. A. A. C. P. gathered

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has 125,000 signatures to a petition which was presented to President Coolidge in February of this year.

War department, the Parole board, The N. A. A. C. P. in making public the success of the campaign thus far, expressed its most cordial appreciation for co-operation received from during the campaign in behalf of the men, and efforts will be continued in behalf of the men still in prison, with the endeavor to shorten further the prison terms they have to serve.

The reductions of sentence making possible the release of the twenty men paroled this year and the last of the Houston Martyrs by 1928, were made as a result of an examination of the men's records by a board of Officers of the War department this Spring. At that time Secretary Weeks informed the N. A. A. C. P. that 18 men would be eligible for parole during this year, ut in addition to that eighteen more have been paroled.

The N. A. A. C. P. gave out the following brief summary of the action taken in the cases of the Houston

the sentences of all military pris-

oners.

## SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS LOWER COURT'S RULING IN LOCAL CAUSE

Washington, D. C.—The right to vote at primary elections is not a question over which the courts have jurisdiction, the supreme court held Monday in a case from Texas brought by C. N. Love and others against James S. Griffith and others.

The plaintiffs appealed to the first court of Civil Appeals. This court

In the courts of Texas Love and others complained that Griffith and others, including the democratic executive committee of Houston, would per-

mit none except white voters to participate in a primary election. They then sued out a writ of error to state courts declared they were without jurisdiction to interfere and the

case was brought to the Supreme Court jurisdiction, but refused to write an opinion.

If the case stood here as it stood opinion. Inasmuch as the court of

Of this number 35 now remain, all of whom 50,000 names to a petition which before the court of first instance, "Civil Appeals was the last court to write an opinion, the case was brought

them with sentences reduced in consequence of the campaign and petition asking pardon for the men.

6. In 1923, at the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the N. A. A. C. P. in Kansas City, a pilgrimage of more than 500 members and friends was made to Leavenworth Penitentiary and the men were assured that unremitting efforts would be continued for their liberation. In co-operation with churches, fraternal bodies, welfare organizations and the Negro press, the N. A. A. C. P. gathered

a grave question of constitutional law. In regarding its decision the supreme court of the United States held that the "cause of action" did not exist, in that the election had been held even before the case was presented to

"The rule promulgated by the democratic executive committee was for a single election only that had taken place long before the decision of the highest legal tribunal in the country, is a native Texan and graduated from the law department of Howard University, Washington, D. C., in

Attorney R. D. Evans, well-known lawyer of Waco, who fought the case for an injunction that could not have been granted at that time. There year he was admitted to the Supreme

Court of the United States upon motion of Judge Robert H. Terrell.

### Brief History of Case.

This case originated here during the early part of 1921, where C. N. Love, W. L. Davis, J. B. Grigsby, William Nickerson, Jr., Newman Dudley, Jr., and Perry Mack applied to the district court for an injunction to restrain the city democratic executive committee and the election judges from holding a strictly white voters' primary, and to compel them to permit all electors, regardless of race, creed or color, to vote in the party primary.

Upon a hearing this suit was dis-

Leavenworth, Kan., December 13. Four of the 67 Houston rioters, originally condemned to life imprisonment, were released from the federal prison today upon receipt of certificates of parole from the department of justice. With them were given remain, all of whom were given re- ductions by the special clemency board which last spring reviewed

Riots - 1924

Delaware.

## Denies Story of Riot at Delaware Resort

July 21, 1924.

The Washington Tribune.

920 U Street,

Washington, D. C.

Gentlemen:

I have been an employ of the Hotel Henlopen, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware for the past four years and am a resident of Washington, D.C., with my home on Fort Totten Road, but I resided at the Y.M.C.A. Twelfth Street Branch since last October.

There has just come to my notice the article published in the "American" about a supposed race riot at Rehoboth last week. Of all the lurid flights of imagination that I have ever read, this one takes the medal. Some colored boys got into a Ford battle on the boardwalk, but not a single blow was struck as far as I can find out and as far as any weapons being used, the statement is absolutely false. The statement also says that the quarters of the men at the Hotel Henlopen were attacked. I live in the quarters myself and no white men have even been around them, let alone tried to make any trouble. The night after the altercation on the boardwalk there was a full force of town policemen on duty but not a thing occurred.

Swansey, who evidently had the article written up to discredit the Hotel Henlopen and Rehoboth, must have indulged in a little spite work owing to the fact that he was dismissed by the management. The reasons given for his dismissal were insubordination, cursing the colored pantry-woman, quarreling with the cooks and causing dissatisfaction among the other men. The management felt that he was dismissed for ample reasons and deducted the amount of his fare to the beach, offering him the balance which he refused to take. The management told him that if he would receipt for this balance but not in full, he could prosecute his claim for the fare as he saw fit and as the manager of the hotel lives in Washington in the winter, it would be little hardship to him. He refused to take anything.

After his dismissal, Swansey tried

to persuade all the other waiters to quit if he were not allowed his fare. Five of the youngest men in the dining room quit with him voluntarily and the hotel holds receipts in full. The hotel stands ready at any time to pay Swansey the full amount of his wages less the amount of his fare to the beach, amounting to \$7.83. All of the other men in the dining room are perfectly satisfied and refused to join in with Swansey.

I want to state positively that not one single shot was fired on this beach, that there was no fight of any sort whatever around the Hotel Henlopen and that the men who went home with Swansey did so of their own accord.

This letter is written by me voluntarily and not at the request of anyone. I do it because I have always been treated most fairly by the Hotel management and I have found that they stand by their men not only in the summer, but in the winter as well, when they are in need. I think it is unfair to allow such an article to go undenied and prevent a lot of men from coming here to work at one of finest beaches on the coast. I have never known of a colored man being molested or beat up in this town and I am sure that if anything of the kind occurred that Mr. Burton, the manager, would be the first one to step to the front and see that the offenders were punished and his men properly protected.

Had Mr. Swansey made this statement in Waco, Texas (where he says he comes from) it would have been more appropriate than in a city of broadminded people like Washington.

I hope that the intelligent people of

Washington will consider the two statements and decide for themselves which is the more sensible.

I trust that you will see fit to publish this letter.

Very truly yours,  
• FURMAN JONES.

### Riots in Delaware

WILMINGTON, Del., July 26.—Reports have just reached here that Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, has been the scene of race riots of some dimension the past few days in which several waiters were besieged in their quarters resisting the attack of a group of whites armed with guns and stones.

S. R. Swansey, a law student at Howard University, and several others,

waiters, barely escaped with their lives. The trouble is believed to have occurred when rowdys accosted a waiter who was employed at a hotel here and demanded that he get off the sidewalk. The following night the attack was renewed on the waiters and bullets were exchanged.

Riots—1924.

Elaine.

## SIX ELAINE RIOTERS ASKING FOR PARSONS

Gov. McRae Petitioned to Act  
Before Terral Comes In.

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Dec. 21.—Scipio Jones, chief attorney for the Elaine negro rioters, left tonight for Barnes, Sikes Fox, John Ratliff, Gilmore Jenkins, Sam Wilson, Charles Jones, Ed Mitchell and Will Perkins, all except Perkins have been at the state prison farm at Cummins since serving time in the state on their conviction. Perkins has been serving time at the state farm at Cummins. The petition at the "walls" here. Those sentences will be presented to the governor on Wednesday, the day before Christmas, and will be given 12 years. They were originally given the death sentence, but their sentences were commuted in November, 1923, to 2 years' imprisonment.

The six negroes are Frank Moore, T. J. Scallion, Lonoke County, murder, life to 15 years; Ed Hicks, J. E. Knox, Frank Hicks, Der, from life to 15 years; Paul Hall and Ed Coleman. The latter is said to be 81 years old.

They are the only ones out of the 50 negroes convicted in connection with the riot who remain in custody of the state. The eight negroes who received 21-year sentences in connection with the trouble, released by Dec. 10, are R. J. Long, Prairie County, murder, life to 15 years; Lee Thompson, Lonoke County, life

with the death sentence, Alva Hughes, Polk County, murder, life to 15 years; Alonzo Averhard, Craighead County, Alonzo Averhard, Craighead County, murder, life to 15 years; Ed Winkler, Washington County, murder, life to 15 years; J. B. Laster, Mississippi County, arson, seven years to three years; Ed Dixon, Clark County, murder, 15 years to 10 years; Charles Sedman, Madison County, murder, 15 years to 10 years; Elvas Padget, Crittenden County, murder, 16 years to eight years.

Gov. McRae said that clemency was recommended in each case by the honorary penitentiary commission, whose members said the 19 men had obeyed all rules of the prison and had been "exemplary prisoners."

Clemency was granted to another man, who was not included in the list recommended by the prison commission, on condition that he make restitution to the "injured party." He was E. L. Schrop, sentenced from White County, in November, 1923, to serve two years on a larceny charge.

## EIGHT OF ELAINE NEGROES RELEASED

Indefinite Furloughs Feature  
Christmas Clemency by  
Governor.

## 10 COMMUTATIONS ISSUED

Sentences Are Reduced by McRae  
Upon Recommendation of Penitentiary Commission.

Six Rioters, Once Sentenced  
to Death, Must Carry On.

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Dec. 19.—Gov. McRae today presented Christmas presents to 19 convicts in the form of executive clemency, commuting the

sentences of 10 prisoners and granting nine other indefinite furloughs among them. The negroes convicted in connection with the Elaine riot in 1919, in which several persons were killed, The eight men were serving 21-year sentences. The six other Elaine negroes, twice sentenced to be executed by the state supreme court of the United States, will not receive executive clemency from Gov. McRae, he said. Following the reversal of the state court's decision, the six negroes pleaded guilty to lesser charges and were given 12 years each.

Among those to receive clemency were eight negroes convicted in connection with the Elaine riot in 1919, when several persons were killed. All were given indefinite furloughs.

and if you find I am worthy of consideration, I assure you no further regret having given me this opportunity."

### Must Pay Losses.

Clemency was granted Schrop on condition he make restitution to the other Elaine negroes, twice sentenced to death in the electric chair but whose sentences subsequently were reversed by the Supreme Court of the United States, will not receive clemency from Governor McRae. After the highest court reversed the state courts, and to have been "exemplary prisoners," Dee Horton, superintendent of the prison, told the governor all those on the clemency list "were worthy convicts." Mr. Horton received the proclamations at the governor's office yesterday afternoon, and will release the prisoners this morning.

The Penitentiary Commission, at a recent meeting, adopted resolution urging Governor McRae to extend clemency to 18 prisoners, who were said to have obeyed all rules of the prison and to have been "exemplary prisoners." Dee Horton, superintendent of the prison, told the governor all those on the clemency list "were worthy convicts." Mr. Horton received the proclamations at the governor's office yesterday afternoon, and will release the prisoners this morning.

The eight Elaine negroes who will be released from the prison today are Will Barnes, Sikes Fox, John Ratliff, Gilmore Jenkins, Sam Wilson, Charles Jones, Ed Mitchell and Will Perkins.

All of them, except Perkins, have been on the state farm at Cummins since their imprisonment. Perkins has been at the "walls."

Those condemned to death, but who later accepted 12-year sentences, are Frank and Ed Hicks, Frank Moore, J. E. Knox, Ed Coleman and Paul Hall.

**Sentences Commuted.** The governor commuted the following sentences:

T. J. Scallion, Lonoke county, murder, from life to 15 years.

Alva Hughes, Polk county, murder, life to 15 years.

Alonzo Averhard, Craighead county, murder, life to 15 years.

Lee Thompson, Lonoke county, life to 15 years.

R. J. Long, Prairie county, murder, life to 15 years.

Ed Winkler, Washington county, murder, life to 15 years.

J. B. Laster, Mississippi county, arson, seven years to three years.

Ed Dixon, Clark county, murder, 15 years to 10 years.

Charles Sedman, Madison county, murder, 15 years to 10 years.

Elvas Padget, Crittenden county, murder, 16 years to eight years.

**Clemency Recommended.** Clemency in each instance was recommended by the Honorary Penitentiary Commission and its author, Governor McRae said. In another case, however, the governor said he was "touched" by the appeal of a prisoner sent up from Lonoke county for two years on a charge of larceny.

The convict wrote a letter to the governor asking clemency. Contrary to the general rule, it was not accompanied by petitions or recommendations from "prominent citizens" or prison officials. The letter was written by E. L. Schrop, who was sentenced in November, 1923. It follows: "May I not at this time, during this period of peace on earth and good will toward all men, plead for executive clemency? Knowing your desire to give every person an opportunity to rehabilitate themselves, having witnessed that desire in the many furloughs you have given others, I earnestly assure you were I likewise treated, I would make that desire a concrete example by my future con-

Riots-1924.

Florida.

## RACE RIOT THREATENS AT JACKSONVILLE

### Four White Men Shot in Fight With Negroes.

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., Sept. 1.—Every "extra" of the Jacksonville police force is on duty tonight preparing for any development resulting from a race riot in which four white men were shot and seriously wounded this afternoon. One of these is Police Officer W. J. Kelly, who is not ex-officer, a high official in the city. Fighting took place in the negro section of the city. Racial feeling had better stop Niggers from shooting down white men, no matter what running at fever heat tonight.

Mayor John Alsop said this evening that, although he felt the situation was "serious," he had no doubt of light, and appeals to policemen, who the ability of the police to maintain order.

The first clash came shortly before 9-2-24 station and get a warrant.

3 o'clock this afternoon. W. J. Kelly, the wounded officer, was on duty in by a street car conductor, who kicked the negro quarters when the shooting a man in the face who attempted to affray started. His three white companions are seriously injured but they are expected to recover. Scores of negroes are being rounded up by peace officers and thrown into jail on charges of suspicion, in connection with the riot.

## FOUR KILLED IN FIGHT IN FLORIDA CITY

### Crowd of Whites Open Fire on Homes

Jacksonville, Fla., Oct. 17.—Four men are dead and 11 have been sent to the hospital following a pitched battle between the two races here early Monday night. The fight started according to reports, when a group of white men, numbering about 15, went on the outskirts of the city to have a "little fun" by firing shots from houses occupied by our people. A volley of shots greeted the merrymakers when they opened fire on a dwelling in which Dave Moberley had collected a group of his friends for an entertainment. Moberley rushed out, gun in hand,

and fired at random. A bullet from his gun hit the leader of the crowd in the head. He fled to the rear. Other shots followed in quick succession, and the shooting became general.

Feeling has been intense here ever since the lynching of Warren Wood, 17-year-old boy, at Jasper. Wood was burned at the stake. Another incident that has promoted bad-feeling was the shooting to death of Policeman W. J. Kelly, a few weeks ago. Citizens of our Race have been indiscriminately beaten in the streets by crowds of white men; women have been insulted on street cars, and in many cases men have been kicked off. Complaints at the police station are treated with indifference.

Klan influence over city officials is very evident. When a complaint was made regarding the invading of

men's homes without a warrant on the part

of policeman W. J. Kelly, who is not ex-

officer, a high official in the city.

Expected to live through the night. The government replied as follows: "You

had better stop Niggers from shoot-

ing down white men, no matter what

a white man does."

In the main streets of the city men

have been slugged in broad day-

light, and appeals to policemen, who

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order.

met with this answer: "Go to the

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The latest brutality practiced was.

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9-2-24

get on the car ahead

Riots—1924.

Georgia.

VALDOSTA, Ga.

Mar. 3, 1924

## RACE RIOT WAS AVOIDED AFTER KILLING IN HATLEY

Negro Was Killed Following Quarrel Over Purchase of  
Gasoline.

(Special Correspondent)

CORDELE, Ga., Mar. 2.—Hatley is quiet today following its disorder last night, which for a time being had the earmarks of a serious race riot. The prompt arrival of the sheriff and several deputies from Cordele resulted in the steadily increasing crowd being dispersed. The affair was the outgrowth of the killing of a negro by a brother-in-law of John Warren, prominent citizen of this section. Hatley is situated several miles from this city. happened to be between a colored girl and a white girl and a similar difficulty, no doubt, would have happened had the participants all been of one race. The racial aspect of the trouble was merely an incident of the affair and would have had no bearing upon the matter, if the grown-ups had not injected themselves into it. Little brushes of this kind are nothing new, they have been going on ever since there were children and the whole matter should have been treated as a minor affair and not played up as a near race riot, an opinion which was well expressed by Superintendent Gibson in the Morning News a few days after the incident, in the following language:

"There will be no further developments in the case. The whole trouble, he said, centered about a minor difficulty among the pupils of the school. So far as the school authorities are concerned the matter is a closed incident."

The right version of the trouble was taken by Recorder Schwarz in police court Saturday morning when he dismissed one of the male teachers of Cuyler street school, against whom a charge of inciting riot had been made when in reality the teacher in question was in the midst of the turmoil trying to do his utmost to quiet the whole unnecessarily ugly situation. The recorder took a manly view of the situation and did not try to make a big thing out of something which was, in reality, hardly worth noticing. He might have played to the gallery and placed much undue stress on what might have happened, but he viewed the case as it was and in the bigness of his mind refused to "make a mountain out of a mole."

### ONLY CHILDREN'S FRACAS

The excitement which was occasioned last Wednesday morning when a little colored girl and a white girl of about similar age became involved in an altercation in the neighborhood of Montgomery street and Park avenue lane, following trouble which the two had on two previous mornings, was all a matter of minor consequence and had no semblance of a race riot or anything of such a serious nature. It was simply the capers of children and had the grown-ups not precipitated themselves into the trouble it would have, no doubt, passed unnoticed. The difficulty which occurred simply

51-24

# Riots — 1924

## THE COST OF A RIOT.

The estimated cost of the Chicago race riot of 1919 to that municipality will exceed \$600,000. This expense includes damages to property, injuries to persons and maintenance of state troops. The Fall River Globe aptly comments on this: "It is cheaper to prevent riots when possible than to pay for them. Likewise, it is cheaper for cities to enforce statutes and ordinances than to tolerate lawlessness or vice."

### Reaping the Whirlwind.

Months ago Herrin, Illinois, gave two distinct shocks to the civilized world. The first came when a mob of mine strikers, or strike sympathizers, slaughtered a group of strike breakers and guards with fiendish brutality. Sure was it discouraging and dispiriting enough to read that human beings were tied together like so many hogs, marched through jeering throngs that belabored and mutilated them, then shot down and permitted to die slowly in the most heartless agony. But as barbaric as those murderers were they were not quite so primitive as the law enforcing authorities who, with proper determination and diligence, could have prevented that foul blot upon civilization. The second shock, an even more disheartening one, came when all of those accused of the first crime were acquitted despite the damning evidence against them.

It was evident then that the brutality of the mob was the direct product of the insensibility of the law enforcing authorities and subsequent events have made that evidence absolutely conclusive. Only the natural and the inevitable things have happened at Herrin since organized law abdicated its throne to organized lawlessness. The forces of lawlessness, vindicated in murder naturally conceived it to be their vested right to trample upon the laws that prohibited the sale of intoxicants, gambling and organized vice. And the forces of law under a less notorious emergency were equally unable or unwilling to function.

Then came the introduction of an outside agency that has undertaken to enforce the law but that has been lawless itself, according to the published accounts, in the manner of enforcement. The result has been that the forces of law have been di-

vided against themselves. They have turned to fighting one another rather than the agencies of lawlessness. The double tragedy in which one law officer of one faction was shot down and another officer of another faction murdered immediately afterwards followed as naturally as night follows the day.

Herrin now stands advertised to the world as a place where law is lawless and lawlessness is law. Lawlessness reigns and law is engaged in civil war. But what more could Herrin expect than to reap the whirlwind after it had sown the wind?

## SUES LAWYER WHO WON IN RIOT CASES! 1 RIOTERS ARE FREED BY ILLINOIS GOV.

*Chicago Defender*  
Suit Filed to Recover

Sum of \$1,280

Suit was filed in the municipal court last Thursday against Attorney A. L. Williams, 184 W. Washington St., by Mrs. Emma Graves, 3213 Ellis Ave., through her attorney, Jose Ward Hoover, City Hall Square building, to recover the sum of \$1,280, being a balance still due her as a part of the \$4,500 settlement effected by Attorney Williams with the city of Chicago in the tragic race riots of 1919 for the murder of her son, Theodore Copeland.

Mrs. Graves stated that Attorney Williams has paid her only \$2,080, of which the \$80 was paid only a few days ago. In filing her suit against Attorney Williams she is attempting to break her contract with him, due to a clause in the city ordinance allowing attorneys 25 per cent of damages for their fees, while Attorney

## Illinois.

Williams holds her signed contract for 40 per cent.

Theodore Copeland, her 18-year-old son, was murdered during the 1919 race riots and there was no little unfavorable comment regarding his death at the inquest. It seemed unlikely that the city would effect a settlement in his case. Several attorneys had unsuccessfully handled the case and permitted it to drop. Attorney Williams took the case almost two years after the race riots and promised her to secure a settlement if possible. They agreed, Mrs. Graves and Attorney Williams, that they would split 50-50 on whatever could be obtained. Attorney Williams added this case to the 19 others he had pending for death settlements and let it take its course, with no expense to Mrs. Graves.

January 2, 1923, the city council set aside a settlement of \$4,500 for each death arising from the race riots and allowing attorneys' costs and fees not to exceed 25 per cent of the settlement, or \$1,125. Alderman Lyle at the time stated that he did not know whether this was a fair allowance, and further he did not know whether the city had the right to govern fees in these cases. In May, 1923, Attorney Williams paid Mrs. Graves \$2,000, which left a balance of \$250. The final payment has been arranged for and Mrs. Graves has signed a release which Attorney Williams holds, together with the contract naming his fee as 50 per cent of total damages collected.

The first hearing of the case will come up before Judge John J. Rooney of the municipal court Monday, April 14. Doubtless the case will be held over for a jury trial.

*Chicago Defender*  
1 Rioters Are Freed By Illinois Gov.

Men Were Serving Sentences As Result Of E. St. Louis Massacre. Political Significance In Act Of Executive Next Day After His Re-election.

## REVENGE ON ENEMIES

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., Nov. 5.—One of the first official acts of Governor Small after his victory in the recent

election was to pardon 11 of the men who participated in the East St. Louis riot in 1917. Seven of the men were colored. They would have been freed from prison a year from now.

It was said that for the past three years people of East St. Louis and St. Claire county have pleaded for executive clemency for the men who were convicted in the East St. Louis riot cases, on the grounds that at the time of their trials the public mind was wrought-up, causing several who were not guilty to be incarcerated and the too severe sentencing of others. The families of many of the imprisoned men were also declared to be suffering extreme hardships.

Governor Small in pardoning the men stated that the men pardoned "were no more guilty than hundreds of others who took part in these riots."

### Men Released Thursday

The men were released after noon luncheon Thursday. They were: Charles Foster, Albert Huges, Will Palmer, Fayette Parker, O'Fanniel Peoples, George Roberts, Dee Smotherman, Horace Thomas and Bud Townsend.

A large party from East St. Louis went to the penitentiary to welcome them and escort them home. Among those in the crowd were: John Barnes, Grand Master Masons, chairman committee, Col. Otis B. Duncan, Matt Hayes, Atty. N. Parden, R. M. Green and Wm. Officer Jr.

Riots - 1924.

# RACE WAR MENACES CONSTRUCTION CAMPS

Disturbances Follow Slaying  
of White Man.

GUARDSMEN BRING PEACE

Trouble Occurs in Vicinity of Dix  
River Dam, Hydro-Electric  
Project Near Harrodsburg—The  
Situation Now Under Control.

HARRODSBURG, Ky., Nov. 10.—After a night of disorder, quiet had been restored in the construction camps that flank the site of Dix River Dam, a huge hydro-electric project under construction on Dix River near here.

Arrival of detachments of Kentucky National Guardsmen brought to an end clashes between white construction workers and farmers on one side and negro workers at the dam which followed the slaying of Edward Winkle, 21, white worker, by a negro laborer Sunday night.

Sheriff Kennedy of Mercer County tonight said the situation no longer was tense and further trouble was not expected.

Clashes followed rapidly Sunday night and early today, resulting in a general exodus of negroes from the labor camps.

Quiet was restored when 35 members of Troop A, Fifty-fourth Machine Gun Squadron, National Guard, arrived in motor trucks and assumed charge of the situation.

Nearly 300 of the 700 negroes employed on the dam, and driven from the camp, returned after the arrival of the troops, wandering back in groups of half a dozen or more. All showed effects of exposure. Many were without shoes, none were fully dressed and some were without trousers.

About 250 of the negroes, following their flight, were corralled by the authorities at Burgin, where they spent the night under the protection of deputy sheriffs and citizens of the village.

The negroes were harbored in an abandoned rock quarry, where they huddled around bonfires. Deputy sheriffs stationed around the quarry permitted none to leave. They were taken back to the dam this afternoon.

The murdered man detailed to companions, 10 minutes before his death, how three negroes attempted to rob him, and said he had been shot by "Jelly Roll." A wound through the left lung and another through the neck, which severed an artery, caused Winkle to bleed profusely as he related his story. "Jelly Roll" shot him, he said, after he had resisted their efforts to rob him.

News of the slaying spread quickly throughout the camp and adjoining farming sections. Farmers and white workers at the dam rushed to the construction camp, armed themselves with rifles, pistols, shotguns, pitchforks and other weapons and stormed the negro bunkhouses. Those not

Kentucky.

armed seized stones and threw them at the negroes as they fled.

Marshal J. Royalty, leaving church at Burgin, was on his way home when from down the road he heard a command "hands up." Going to the place, he discovered about 60 white men surrounding the hundreds of negroes at the Burgin depot. A few minutes later Sheriff Kennedy arrived.

The officers demanded that the mob allow law and order to prevail.

The mob finally turned back, leaving the officers in charge of the situation at Burgin. Members of the mob had told the officers it was their intention to flag a train at Burgin and send the negroes away on it.

## 12 NEGROES VICTIMS OF HARRISBURG RIOT

HARRISBURG, Ky., November 12.—Twelve negroes were victims of rioting at the Dix River dam construction camp Sunday night and Monday, it became known today. Men have been secretly sheltered at homes of friends and two are in a hospital here where their recovery is said to be doubtful, it was reported.

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Riots - 1924.

New Jersey.

# 'JIM CROW' CUSTOM IS THE CAUSE

## Mob of Bathers Menaces A Group of Pleasure Seekers at A.C.

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J., July 26.—A near race riot, said to have at the root of it the practice of racial discrimination along the boardwalk, occurred near the Steeplechase Pier here Sunday, and was finally quelled when the city's entire police force was called out to disperse a milling mob of more than 5,000 bathers who surrounded a small group of colored men.

### On Forbidden Ground

The point at which the disturbance took place is generally known as ground forbidden to dark bathers. Several young colored men ignored the custom and went into the ocean at this point. They were soon the target of insult from other bathers, and a fight finally ensued.

Sgt. Michael Bird undertook to quell the disorder by ordering the youths away from the scene. When they refused to leave he took sides with the rioters and began attempting to shove the boys down the beach. John Usroy, 19, of 709 Baltic Ave., resisted, and was placed under arrest.

As the crowd began to gather, Patrolman Ed Shaw and Capt. Alex Miller rushed to the scene and helped Officer Bird drag Usroy to the So. Carolina Avenue tent. Usroy's comrades interfered to rescue him, and the fight soon became general.

### Others Arrested

George Thomas, 19 Emmanuel Terrace, was also placed under arrest, as was W. M. Christmas, of 39 No. Kentucky Avenue. As the men were dragged away under arrest the crowds at the beach followed and jeered them.

intimidating others who were bathing. Usroy was jailed in default of \$100 bond on charges of disorderly conduct and inciting to riot.

Riots—1924.

New York.

## NEGROES START A NEAR RIOT

*M. J. Grimes*

Two Men Resist Arrest and Reserves

Scatter Big Crowd.

Declaring that they had started what nearly became a serious riot, Patrolman Alfred Elgass appeared before Magistrate Jess Silbermann in West Side Court yesterday with two battered negroes charging them with disorderly conduct. Magistrate Silbermann sent the men to the workhouse for ten days.

Elgass said he was walking through Fifty-ninth Street, between Eighth and Ninth Avenues, yesterday morning before dawn when he saw a score of negroes standing around in front of 340 West Fifty-ninth Street. He told them to move along, and all but two obeyed him. A laborer named Ducking of 239 West Sixty-third Street and William Walter, 48, a longshoreman, of 333 West Fifty-ninth Street resisted the patrolman.

One of them seized a milk bottle and started to hurl it at Elgass, the patrolman said, when he intercepted it with his night stick. The other had hurled another bottle at him. During a hand-to-hand struggle with Hill, Walters, accompanied by many of the lately chased negroes, ran to the roofs and threw bricks, the covers of milk cans, ash cans and other missiles at him. Rivers from the West Forty-seventh Street station dispersed the crowd, and the men were arrested.

Riots—1924.

**GIRL, 3, KILLED**

**IN STREET RIOT**

Pittsburg, May 26.—A three-year-old girl, Ida Kirtsman, was fatally injured during a riot between groups of white men and negroes in the Hill district tonight. The girl was struck on the head by a brick, and died later in a hospital. The disturbance was quelled by several squads of police.

Edward Hennings, negro, alleged to have thrown the brick that struck the child, was taken to a hospital with many cuts and bruises but was said not to have been seriously injured. Ten persons, seven negroes and three white men, were arrested in connection with the riot.

The riot was precipitated, according to the police, when Hennings threw a brick at three white men. The brick struck the girl who fell in the street. The negro resented a remark made by the three white men, the police reported.

A crowd quickly gathered when the child fell and fighting became general between white men and negroes who had come to Hennings' assistance. Squads of police armed with riot guns responded to a riot call and restored order before the disturbance had assumed serious proportions.

AUGUSTA GA. CHRONICLE  
MAY 28, 1924

### Pittsburg's Race Riot

News reports of a race riot between the colored citizens and a group of white citizens of the Hill district of Pittsburg, Pa., brings back for discussion the old, old question of failure to understand the true situation and the relationship that should be recognized as existing between the races.

Unfortunately, however, this situation is not confined to any race, for racial differences have always existed and will always exist to some extent, at least. In the South the two people's have come to understand each other and appreciate each other's position more surely than elsewhere the whole world over. In the South there is less dissension than to be found anywhere else in the world, when the relative numbers of the peoples involved are considered.

The South deplores the fact that there should be racial disturbances in Pittsburg, New York, Illinois, or anywhere else, but with a new condition confronting the people, occasioned largely by the extraordinary migration of colored people to the north, occasioning difficulties which have heretofore been unseen, there will be recurrences of trouble of this kind.

It is only by education, association and an understanding of the real situation that something dread-

ful can be averted. Of course, the killing of an innocent child in the Pittsburg affray and the injuring of many of those engaged in the fracas, as well as others innocent of any harmful intent, will seem bad enough, but the extent of the trouble does not end with the conclusion of the scrap there, for it engenders a spirit of unrest that will continue indefinitely.

What the Northern communities should do, where there are large numbers of newcomers from the colored contingent of our population, is to engage some of the leading colored workers of Augusta to come to their community and instill a spirit of harmony and create an understanding among the races which would be generally beneficial.

Pennsylvania.

Riots-1924.

Oklahoma.

## NEGROES ARE RELEASED

### Five Charged With Attempt At Race Riot.

OKEMUH, OKLA., Dec. 14.—Five negroes arrested yesterday by Okfuskee county officers on charges of attempting to incite negro inhabitants of Boley to rise against the whites of the county, were at liberty today on bond of \$1,000 each. 12-15-24

The arrests followed a lengthy investigation of the rupture between the two races in that country when several negroes disarmed Sheriff R. H. McKinnon several weeks ago and drove him from the city after he had attempted to arrest John Owen, city marshal of Boley, on an election irregularity charge.

### NEGROES RELEASED AFTER RIOT CHARGE

Okemah, Okla., December 14.—Five negroes, arrested yesterday by Okfuskee county officers on charges of attempting to incite negro inhabitants of Boley to rise against the whites of the county, were at liberty today on bonds of \$1,000 each.

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### RACE FEELING FLAMES

#### Group Of Negroes Disarm Oklahoma Sheriff And Deputy.

OKEMAH, OKLA., Nov. 5.—Race feeling flamed up in Okfuskee county today after a group of negroes at Boley disarmed R. H. McKinnon, sheriff, and L. C. Lester, a deputy who had gone there to serve a warrant upon John Owen, a negro. Threats to kill the sheriff were made but calmer members of the group prevented bloodshed, according to the sheriff, who returned to Okemah after the encounter. The warrant was not served.

Riots-1924.

Houston.

## PARDON FIVE SOLDIERS

### MORE OF THE HOUSTON SOLDIERS FOR WHICH N. E. R. LEAGUE & N. A. A. C. P. CONDUCTED PARDON CAMPAIGN, ARE LET OUT ON PAROLE.

Leavenworth, Kan., Sept. 17, 1924: Five Negroes former members of the 24th infantry, who were sentenced to life imprisonment in connection with the Houston riots, were released from the federal penitentiary today on parole. 9-20-24

They were sentenced to life imprisonment with 67 other Negro soldiers for disobedience in time of war and assault with intent to murder. Thirteen others were hanged.

Forty-nine of the convicted rioters remain in prison, four having died and the others being paroled.

The five men released today had good records during their nearly seven years of confinement.

Riots—1924.

## FIFTY-FOUR INDICTED IN STUTTGART PROBE

Forty-Four Result of Attack  
on the Free Press.

## THREE FOR RICE THEFTS

**Grand Jury Severe in Criticism of  
the Association Methods in Dis-  
pensing Liquors and in Employ-  
ing Legal Firms.**

STUTTGART, Ark., Jan. 6.—The special grand jury empaneled Dec. 10, 1923, by Circuit Judge George W. Clark at the request of the people of this community, and also by the Arkansas Rice Growers' Co-Operative Association of these rumors, have invited the Commercial Appeal to make a thorough investigation association to submit the names of alleged crookedness existing in the witnesses who could give evidence in rice mills and in the association, file support of these charges, and after hearing the testimony of the witnesses whose names were submitted by them, and others in addition thereto, find that such reports are unfounded and without substantial evidence to support the same.

The report, which did not disclose any further indictments, was signed by J. W. Searan, foreman; Ed Shook, secretary; C. G. Bab, C. B. Lam, L. M. Harlan, W. J. Lancaster, J. A. Osborne, J. L. Wilson, Floyd Stillwell, Frank Hanna, J. G. Mouser, J. C. Cato, Robert Curtis, Clarence Rich, A. F. Selig and Sam Rhein.

The grand jury has returned in all 54 indictments, 44 of which were as result of the attack by a mob on the Free Press here, the participants pleading guilty and being fined \$100 and costs. Three of the remaining indictments were in connection with rice thefts and the balance for offenses that were not in connection with the principal matters under investigation.

Officials of the association were sharply criticized for certain unbusinesslike methods, but no evidence of crooked dealing was found that could be held as sufficient grounds for indictment. There was also no evidence found to substantiate charges of an organized opposition to the association. The principal findings of the grand jury as related to the investigation follow:

### Grand Jury's Findings.

To the Hon. George W. Clark, circuit court judge: We, your grand jury, empaneled in pursuance to the orders of the court, convened in special session on Dec. 10, 1923, and have been in continuous session for 10 days, and after adjournment of one week for the holidays, reassembled on the last day of the past year, and have continued in the discharge of our duties for the past six days in investigating specifically the situation in the rice industry in the northern district of this county. We have examined 91 witnesses, who have been paid for their attendance, and quite a few who volunteered before our body.

We have examined into various reports, charges, counter charges, insinuations, innuendos and recriminations which have been made by the faction opposing the present management of the association and those favoring its plans and policies; we found a very unfortunate condition of affairs existing by reason of the rivalry

and enmity between the different factions, who are engaged in the rice industry in this county, which finally culminated in the wrecking of one of the newspapers in the city of Stuttgart on Dec. 6. Two of the parties participating in this unlawful, unwarrented act were directors of the association. For this offense we re-turned indictments against 11 association members for different crimes represented by their conduct in the wrecking of this property, and assaulting the proprietors of this paper.

The evidence before us disclosed that the parties accused of these crimes on the day and only a short time before these outrages were perpetrated met in the offices of the association, held a conference and left the association offices, went direct to the place where this paper was published, wrecked the property, assaulted the publishers thereof, inflicting cruel and unusual punishment upon them and immediately thereafter returned to the association offices, but they, the participants therein, deny that the executive officers had knowledge of their intended acts.

Numerous charges from the association members and officers were made that a fund had been created and subscribed to by banks and the rice enemies to the association to be used in an effort to break down the same; we have made a diligent inquiry, a careful, full and complete investigation, to the稟eath of the Wheatley mill that 307 pockets of rice disappeared which belonged to the rice growers of that territory, and no proof of an account has ever been made for the same. The Wheatley mill not being in the jurisdiction of this court, it necessarily follows that no indictments could be returned covering this offense.

### Payish Entertaining.

During the years of 1921 and 1922 the expense account of the secretary and general manager of the Stuttgart Rice Milling Company disclosed that such secretary and general manager spent more than \$2,800 in entertaining the members of the executive board.

This entertainment consisted principally, according to the testimony of such officer, of supplying members of the executive board with intoxicating liquors. It further appears from the testimony that each of the executive officers received gratuitously from this officer of the Stuttgart Rice Milling Company a hand-hammered silver flask costing \$10.50 each to be used as a container for alcoholic beverages. We submit in all seriousness that the expenditure of such a large sum of money for entertainment by a corporation which has not paid any dividends for the past five years is unprecedent and would indicate selfish and ulterior motives on the part of such party exercising such a high degree of liberality. We find that in 1921 the operations of the association discloses losses aggregating \$54,000, which amount was sought to be pro-rated in the handling of future crops.

We find in connection with the theft of 22 cars of rice at the DeWitt mill that the operators of the DeWitt mill apparently had notice of when a check of the stock was to be made and diverted the rice afterwards stolen the day previous to the checking of the same.

We find that a great deal of the friction existing in the association originates in the heavy overhead expenses and especially the salaries paid the four executive officers, to were the oldest and most antiquated gether with the salary of the field man.

The proof discloses that the members of the executive board on their own behalf and for their personal use have employed an array of legal talent consisting of four firms of attorneys, located at Lonoke, Pine Bluff, DeWitt and Brinkley, to represent them, presumably in legal matters when no litigation is now pending in which they are either plaintiffs or defendants, in civil or criminal proceedings. The necessity of such an array of legal talent has not been made known to this grand jury, after a careful investigation of all the facts

## ARKANSAS.

## WARNINGS START EXODUS OF NEGROES

*Sixty*  
**Mysterious Signs Drive All  
But Few Families from  
Catcher Settlement**

Fort Smith, Ark., Jan. 14.—A wholesale exodus of negroes from the Catcher farming settlement near Van Buren, Ark., was reported today as a result of the posting of signs, which mysteriously appeared near the homes of negroes, warning them to leave the community within five days.

George Gant, a deputy sheriff, reported today that with two or three exceptions all of the negro families had left the community and those still there were making preparations to leave. Officers were sent to Catcher to endeavor to identify and arrest those responsible for the posting of the signs. Conditions there were reported quiet this afternoon.

Today's developments came as an aftermath to the recent slaying of Mrs. Effie Latimer and subsequent threatened disorders which resulted in the sending of a detachment of state troops to the scene. Two negroes were convicted of murder and sentenced to death in connection with the death of Mrs. Latimer and eleven others were arrested on charges of night riding. They are now in jail at Van Buren, awaiting trial.

**NEGROES ORDERED OUT  
AFTER WOMAN'S DEATH**

**Mysterious Notices Litter  
Catcher Community.**

FORT SMITH, Ark., Jan. 14.—As an aftermath of the criminal assault and murder of Mrs. Effie Latimer and the sentencing of two negroes, Spurgeon Ruck and Will Bettis, to die in the electric chair after their trial and conviction in Crawford County two weeks ago, signs were mysteriously placed in the homes of negroes in the Catcher community warning them to leave the country within five days. The notice was to the effect that the negroes leave within the time limit would not be harmed, but those remaining may get into serious trouble.

Deputy Sheriff George Gant told of the notices early this morning.

According to Deputy Gant all of the negro families with two or three exceptions, in the Catcher territory had left.

Those remaining are making preparations to leave at the earliest possible moment. Sheriff Maxey and two deputies are investigating today in an effort to apprehend those responsible for the placing of the notices.

Eleven negro residents of Catcher

are being held in the Crawford County jail at Van Buren on charges of night riding in connection with the murder of Mrs. Latimer, who was shot in the back with two loads from a double-barreled shotgun and then clubbed to death on Dec. 25 last.

There were no indications of trouble in the Catcher community when officers visited that place this afternoon.

**NEGROES TAKE LEAVE  
FROM ARKANSAS FARMS**

*Montgomery Advertiser*  
**Mysterious Posters Warn Blacks to  
Leave Settlement**

FOOT SMITH, Ark., Jan. 14.—A wholesale exodus of negroes from the Catcher farming settlement near Van Buren, Ark., was reported today as result of the posting of signs which mysteriously appeared near the homes of negroes, warning them to leave the community within five days.

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They are now in jail at Van Buren awaiting trial.

# RIOT CASE BIG LEGAL VICTORY

The Arkansas cases, won by legal action through the efforts of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, are called "the greatest cases in American legal procedure" in an editorial published in the Outlook for Jan. 6. The late President Theodore Roosevelt was for a time a member of this magazine. The editorial begins:

"Hope and despite, terror, courage and the patient will to struggle to the end were elements involved in one of the greatest cases in American legal procedure that has received little notice in the press of the country. The end of this case was marked by the appearance of the news item several weeks ago which reported that Governor McRae of Arkansas had commuted the sentence of death of six Negroes to terms of 12 years in the state penitentiary. For more than four years there had been a fight for the lives of those men; but there had been more than six lives at stake. The long legal battle which saved these men from the electric chair repelled encroachments of lynch law upon American courts."

#### **Witnesses Tortured**

Reciting the facts in connection with peonage in Arkansas, the massacre of farmers of our Race who organized to obtain their legal rights and the farcical trials meted out to these men in the course of which witnesses were tortured, the editorial continues:

"While the case was in a critical stage Judge Murphy, a man advanced in years, weakened by his toil on the case, died, a martyr to the cause of justice and a witness to the sense of justice among the finest spirits of the South.

"After various technical appeals and after the case was finally argued before the United States supreme court by Moorfield Storey of Boston, former president of the American Bar association, the order of the Arkansas federal court was reversed, and the accused and convicted prisoners were saved from execution that they might have a hearing. And eight months after that their sentences were commuted by the governor of the state."

The editorial concludes with a quotation from Louis Marshall, noted New York attorney, who said of the case that it affixed the following principle: "Due process of law now means not merely a right to be heard before a court, but that it must be before a court that is not paralyzed by mob domination."

Riots - 1924.

Alabama

## Near Riot Is Staged In Ala. When Negro Is Shot

(Commonwealth Press Service)

GEORGIANA, Ala., Dec. 24.—One Negro is dead and another dying after a pistol battle at Industry, a few miles from here. Christmas day when more than 100 shots were fired by inflamed whites and Negroes.

The community is aroused and more trouble is feared from young men of the settlement. *1-4-24*

The trouble started Christmas night when Nilen Joyner, white, is alleged to have shot and killed Dempsey Powell, a Negro, precipitating the trouble. Friends of the principals, inflamed by drink, took up the quarrel. One Negro was seriously wounded and another injured slightly, according to the news brought to Mobile today. Residents of this place fear further trouble.

## Birmingham Negro Starts Race Riot Aboard Street Car

BIRMINGHAM, ALA., March 22.—  
Special to The Advertiser.—Police reserves were called out, armed with riot guns to prevent a threatened clash between whites and blacks on a Birmingham street car this afternoon. The trouble started when a negro sat between two white passengers.

A huge crowd gathered as rumors of battle wild' circulated through the business d' *3-23-24*

Other than 2 and injuries to V. Darnell, who hit by a rock, and the arrest of 2 negroes on charges of assault with intent to murder, nothing serious came of the trouble.

Every available policeman was rushed to the scene under the lead of Chief McDuff.